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CU officials must stand firm

ACTIVISTS at the University of Colorado have made an ominous promise: If university officials don't cancel a scheduled visit by CIA recruiters or convene a panel to consider such a decision, they will escalate their activities from last spring's peaceful protest.

The proper response to this threat of ugly action is to ignore it — and then when the November visit occurs to do all the university can to protect both recruiters and applicants. To even discuss the terms of the CIA visit with people who make such outrageous threats is to dignify their tactics.

It's not as if protesters won't have plenty of opportunity to make their point without stronger action. Last

April, for example, 478 arrests were made during three days of recruiting. But fortunately neither violence nor property damage occurred and charges were dropped.

Just as they did last spring, university officials have signaled their intention to stand by the decision to allow the CIA on campus. This is vital. As the vice chancellor for academic services, Kaye Howe, recently pointed out, the issue is nothing less than whether a self-appointed group — or even a campus majority — should determine "university-approved political ideas."

At an institution of higher learning, of all places, the question should not even be in doubt.